

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2608 authorizes two important interagency programs to coordinate the federal government's efforts to mitigate the loss of life and property from earthquakes and windstorms. I'd like to thank Congressman NEUGEBAUER for all of his hard work and effort as the author and driving force behind the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program. I'd also like to thank Congressman LOFGREN for helping me craft the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program reauthorization and shepherding it through the legislative process.

Damaging earthquakes are inevitable, however infrequent they may be. Total annualized damages from earthquakes in the United States are estimated to be about \$4.4 billion in direct financial losses. The 1994 Northridge earthquake in California (magnitude 6.7) was the most costly in U.S. history, causing over \$40 billion in damages.

Further, all or parts of 39 states are within zones where the probability of an earthquake occurring is great. Recent research indicates that areas in the eastern and central United States are at greater risk of earthquake occurrence than earlier evidence indicated. The threat from earthquakes is constant and far reaching. Indeed, earthquakes are clearly not just a state or regional problem, but a nationwide problem, demanding nationwide mitigation. Accordingly, the federal government mitigates earthquakes through the comprehensive National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program, also known as "NEHRP".

Over the past week, significant earthquake events in California and Washington have garnered our attention and concern. NEHRP-supported monitoring equipment managed by the U.S. Geological Survey and the national Science Foundation have resulted in an unprecedented harvest of data from both the Mr. St. Helens volcanic activity as well as the 6.0 Parkfield Earthquake on the San Andreas Fault. This information will undoubtedly lead to important advances in our understanding of earthquakes, and ultimately in our ability to prepare for and respond to them.

But much room for improvement still exists. Our vulnerability to earthquakes continues to increase. Widespread developments still occurs unabated in areas of high seismic risk. Despite the existence of new knowledge and tools produced by the program, development, adoption, and enforcement of pertinent building codes have been incremental and slower than expected. The private sector has not had adequate incentives, and state and local governments have generally not had adequate budgets, to adopt NEHRP innovations.

It is clear that NEHRP needs to be strengthened. Several aspects of program leadership and coordination continue to be an ongoing problem. Knowledge and awareness of these needs within the Office of Management and Budget, relevant appropriators—and even to some degree NEHRP agencies—has been too low. Many outside of the small community of earthquake interests are unaware that this coordinated effort even exists. These factors are addressed in the legislation before us today.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
Washington, DC, October 8, 2004.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I appreciate your support for the Senate amendment to H.R. 2608,

the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2004. As your letter indicates, the Senate amendment includes provisions from both the House version of H.R. 2608 and H.R. 3980, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004.

I agree that by permitting this bill to be brought before the House and not objecting to its passage by unanimous consent, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure does not waive its jurisdiction over certain provisions of H.R. 2608, as amended by the Senate.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT,
Chairman.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, October 8, 2004.

Hon. SHERWOOD BOEHLERT,
Chairman, Committee on Science,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BOEHLERT: I understand that H.R. 2608, the National Earthquake Reduction Program Reauthorization Act of 2004 has just passed the Senate and incorporates provisions contained in H.R. 3980, the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004.

I note that in Title I of H.R. 2608, as amended by the Senate, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency is directed to: "operate a program of grants and assistance which would enable States to develop preparedness and response plans, prepare inventories and conduct seismic safety inspections of critical structures and lifelines, update building and zoning codes and ordinances to enhance seismic safety, increase earthquake awareness and education, and encourage the development of multi-State groups for such purposes."

As you know, both of these measures contain provisions within the jurisdiction of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. I recognize your desire to bring these important matters before the House in an expeditious manner and I, therefore, do not object to passing them by unanimous consent. By agreeing to this, however, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure does not waive its jurisdiction over H.R. 2608, as amended by the Senate.

I would appreciate it if you would place a copy of this letter and your response in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD when the bill is considered on the House Floor. I would also like to incorporate into this letter, by reference, the letter included in the RECORD when the House of Representatives considered H.R. 3980 on July 7th and 8th, 2004.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG,
Chairman.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2608.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

AMENDING THE SECURITIES LAWS TO PERMIT CHURCH PENSION PLANS TO BE INVESTED IN COLLECTIVE TRUSTS

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1533) to amend the securities laws to permit church pension plans to be invested in collective trusts, with a Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Clerk read the Senate amendment, as follows:

Senate amendment:

Page 2, strike lines 17 through 22 and insert:

(2) by striking "other than any plan described in clause (A), (B), or (C)" and inserting the following: "or (D) a church plan, company, or account that is excluded from the definition of an investment company under section 3(c)(14) of the Investment Company Act of 1940, other than any plan described in subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D)".

Mr. LATOURETTE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO REVEREND DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Financial Services be discharged from further consideration of the Senate bill (S. 1368) to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. (posthumously) and his widow Coretta Scott King in recognition of their contributions to the Nation on behalf of the civil rights movement, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 1368

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. and his widow Coretta Scott King, as the first family of the civil rights movement, have distinguished records of public service to the American people and the international community;